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RIVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

WITH NOTES AND A
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH



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The Riverside Literature Series

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
AND NOTES



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

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Read the Rainy Day
Learn the Psalm of life

God's Acre
Reaper and the Flowers.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW	5
THE CHILDREN'S HOUR	11
THE WINDMILL	13
MAIDEN AND WEATHERCOCK	14
DECORATION DAY	15
HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETHLEHEM	16
THE PHANTOM SHIP	18
PEGASUS IN POUND	20
THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS	23
WALTER VON DER VOGELWEID	24
SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT	26
VICTOR GALBRAITH	28
THE ROPEWALK	30
SANTA FILOMENA	33
THE THREE KINGS	35
THE CASTLE BY THE SEA	37
THE SKELETON IN ARMOR	39
THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ	45
MAIDENHOOD	46
EXCELSIOR	48
THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH	50
FROM MY ARM-CHAIR	52
SONG: "STAY, STAY AT HOME, MY HEART"	54
THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS	55
THE BELLS OF LYNN	58
THE TIDE RISES, THE TIDE FALLS	60
THE OPEN WINDOW	60
RESIGNATION	61
A DAY OF SUNSHINE	63
DAYLIGHT AND MOONLIGHT	64
TWILIGHT	65
DAYBREAK	66

1st 3 stanzas of Psalm of life

CONTENTS

THE CITY AND THE SEA	67
FOUR BY THE CLOCK	68
/ A PSALM OF LIFE	68
THE CASTLE-BUILDER	70
/ THE CHAMBER OVER THE GATE	70
THE REVENGE OF RAIN-IN-THE-FACE	72
PRELUDE	74
THE BOY AND THE BROOK	75
THE SEA HATH ITS PEARLS	76
A SONG FROM THE PORTUGUESE	76
LOSS AND GAIN	77
TO THE AVON	77
/ THE ARROW AND THE SONG	78
THE CHALLENGE	79
THE DAY IS DONE	80
TO AN OLD DANISH SONG BOOK	82
AMALFI	85
THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE	88
CURFEW	92
/ THE POET AND HIS SONGS	93

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

A VISITOR to Cambridge, in Massachusetts, is very sure to make his first question, Where did Mr. Longfellow live? and any one whom he meets will be able to give the answer. The ample, dignified mansion, built in Colonial days, and famous as the headquarters of Washington during the first year of the War for Independence, is in the midst of broad fields, and looks across meadows to the winding Charles and the gentle hills beyond. Great elms, fragrant lilacs and syringas, stand by the path which leads to the door; and when the poet was living, the passer-by would often catch a glimpse of him as he paced up and down the shaded veranda which is screened by the shrubbery.

Here came, in the summer of 1837, a slight, studious-looking young man, who lifted the heavy brass knocker, which hung then as it does now upon the front door, and very likely thought of the great general as he let it fall with a clang. He had called to see the owner of the house, Mrs. Andrew Craigie, widow of the apothecary-general of the Continental Army in the Revolution. The visitor asked if there was a room in her house which he could occupy. The stately old lady, looking all the more dignified for the turban which was wound about her head, answered, as she looked at the youthful figure, —

“I no longer lodge students.”

“But I am not a student; I am a professor in the University.”

“A professor?” She looked curiously at one so like most students in appearance.

“I am Professor Longfellow,” he said.

"Ah! that is different. I will show you what there is." She led him up the broad staircase, and, proud of her house, opened one spacious room after another, only to close the door of each, saying, "You cannot have that," until at length she led him into the south-east corner-room of the second story. "This was General Washington's chamber," she said. "You may have this;" and here he gladly set up his home. The house was a large one, and already Edward Everett and Jared Sparks had lived here. Mr. Sparks was engaged, singularly enough, upon the Life and Writings of Washington in the very house which Washington had occupied. Afterwards, when Mr. Longfellow was keeping house here, Mr. Joseph E. Worcester, the maker of the dictionary, shared it with him, for there was room for each family to keep a separate establishment, and even a third could have found independent quarters. When Mrs. Craigie died Mr. Longfellow bought the house, and there was his home until he died.

When he came to Cambridge to be Professor of Modern Languages and Literature in Harvard College he was thirty years old. He was but eighteen when he graduated at Bowdoin College, in the class in which Nathaniel Hawthorne also belonged, and he had given such promise that he was almost immediately called to be professor at Bowdoin. He accepted the appointment on condition that he might have three years of travel and study in Europe. The immediate result of his life abroad was in some translations, chiefly from the Spanish, in some critical papers, and in *Outre Mer* [Over Seas], his first prose work. He continued at Bowdoin until 1835, when he was invited to Harvard. Again he went to Europe for further study and travel, and after his return spent seventeen years in his professorship.

Two years after he had begun to teach in Harvard College he published *Hyperion, a Romance*. *Hyperion*, in classic mythology, is the child of heaven and earth, and in this romance the story is told of a young man who had

earthly sorrows and fortunes, but heavenly desires and hopes. It contains many delightful legends and fancies which travel and student life in Europe had brought to the poet's knowledge, and which he had carried back to his countrymen in America. Once afterward, in 1849, he published a romance of New England, *Kavanagh* ; but in the same year that saw *Hyperion* there appeared a thin volume of poems entitled *Voices of the Night* ; and after that Mr. Longfellow continued to publish volumes of poetry, sometimes a book being devoted to a single poem, as *Evangeline*, or *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, or *Hiawatha*, more often containing a collection of shorter poems, and sometimes, as in the *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, a number of poems pleasantly woven into a story in verse.

The house in which Mr. Longfellow lived was full of suggestion of his work, and it remains much as he left it. "The study," as some one wrote of it during the poet's lifetime, "is a busy literary man's workshop : the table is piled with pamphlets and papers in orderly confusion ; ■ high desk in one corner suggests a practice of standing while writing, and gives a hint of one secret of the poet's singularly erect form at an age when the body generally begins to stoop and the shoulders to grow round ; an orange-tree stands in one window ; near it a stuffed stork keeps watch ; on the table is Coleridge's ink-stand ; upon the walls are crayon likenesses of Emerson, Hawthorne, and Sumner." Here, too, is the chair made from the wood of the spreading chestnut-tree under which the village smithy stood, and given to the poet by the children of Cambridge ; here is the pen presented by "beautiful Helen of Maine," the old Danish song-book and the antique pitcher ; upon the staircase is the old clock, which

"Points and beckons with its hands ;"

one looks out from the chamber windows across the meadows upon the gentle Charles, —

“Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear ;”

following the river one sees the trees and chimneys of Elmwood, and perhaps a flight of

“herons winging their way
O'er the poet's house in the Elmwood thickets ;”

while farther still one catches sight of the white tower of Mount Auburn and thinks of the graves there to which so many of the poet's friends were borne, and to which he himself was at last carried. It would be a pleasant task to read closely in Mr. Longfellow's poems and discover all the kind words which he has written of his friends. A man is known by the company he keeps. How fine must have been that nature which gathered into immortal verse the friendship of Agassiz, Hawthorne, Lowell, Sumner, Whittier, Tennyson, Irving ; and chose for companionship among the dead such names as Chaucer, Dante, Keats, Milton, Shakespeare. All these names, and more, will be found strung as beads upon the golden thread of Longfellow's verse.

After all, the old house where the poet lived was most closely connected with his poems, because it was a home. Here his children grew, and out of its chambers issued those undying poems which sing the deep life of the fireside. In *The Golden Mile-Stone* he sings : —

“Each man's chimney is his Golden Mile-Stone ;
Is the central point, from which he measures
Every distance
Through the gateways of the world around him ;”

and the secret of Mr. Longfellow's power is in the perfect art with which he brought all the treasures of the old world stories, and all the hopes of the new, to this central point ; his own fireside fed the flames of poetic genius, and kept them burning steadily and purely.

Mr. Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine, February

27, 1807. He had two sons and three daughters, and these three are celebrated in the first poem in the following collection. The poet always welcomed children to his house, and he was made very happy by their thought of him. His seventy-fifth birthday was celebrated by school-children all over the country. A few days after he was taken ill, and died March 24, 1882.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence :
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall !
By three doors left unguarded,
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair ;

If I try to escape, they surround me ;
 They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
 Their arms about me entwine,
 Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen ¹
 In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti, ²
 Because you have scaled the wall,
 Such an old moustache ³ as I am
 Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,
 And will not let you depart,
 But put you down into the dungeon
 In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
 Yes, forever and a day,
 Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
 And moulder in dust away !

¹ Near Bingen on the Rhine is a little square Mouse-Tower, so called from an old word meaning toll, since it was used as a toll-house ; but there is an old tradition that a certain Bishop Hatto, who had been cruel to the people, was attacked in the tower by a great army of rats and mice. See Southey's famous poem, *Bishop Hatto*.

² An Italian word for bands of robbers.

³ A translation of the French phrase *vieille moustache*, which is used of a veteran soldier.

THE WINDMILL.

BEHOLD ! a giant am I !
Aloft here in my tower,
With my granite jaws I devour
The maize, and the wheat, and the rye,
And grind them into flour.

I look down over the farms ;
In the fields of grain I see
The harvest that is to be,
And I fling to the air my arms,
For I know it is all for me.

I hear the sound of flails
Far off, from the threshing-floors
In barns, with their open doors,
And the wind, the wind in my sails,
Louder and louder roars.

I stand here in my place,
With my foot on the rock below,
And whichever way it may blow
I meet it face to face,
As a brave man meets his foe.

And while we wrestle and strive,
My master, the miller, stands
And feeds me with his hands ;
For he knows who makes him thrive,
Who makes him lord of lands.

On Sundays I take my rest ;
Church-going bells begin

Their low, melodious din;
 I cross my arms on my breast,
 And all is peace within.

MAIDEN AND WEATHERCOCK

MAIDEN.

O WEATHERCOCK on the village spire,
 With your golden feathers all on fire,
 Tell me, what can you see from your perch
 Above there over the tower of the church?

WEATHERCOCK.

I can see the roofs and the streets below,
 And the people moving to and fro,
 And beyond, without either roof or street,
 The great salt sea, and the fisherman's fleet.

I can see a ship come sailing in
 Beyond the headlands and harbor of Lynn,
 And a young man standing on the deck,
 With a silken kerchief round his neck.

Now he is pressing it to his lips,
 And now he is kissing his finger-tips,
 And now he is lifting and waving his hand,
 And blowing the kisses toward the land.

MAIDEN.

Ah, that is the ship from over the sea,
 That is bringing my lover back to me,
 Bringing my lover so fond and true,
 Who does not change with the wind like you.

WEATHERCOCK.

If I change with all the winds that blow,
It is only because they made me so,
And people would think it wondrous strange,
If I, a Weathercock, should not change.

O pretty Maiden, so fine and fair,
With your dreamy eyes and your golden hair,
When you and your lover meet to-day
You will thank me for looking some other way.

DECORATION DAY.

SLEEP, comrades, sleep and rest
On this Field of the Grounded Arms,
Where foes no more molest,
Nor sentry's shot alarms!

Ye have slept on the ground before,
And started to your feet
At the cannon's sudden roar,
Or the drum's redoubling beat.

But in this camp of Death
No sound your slumber breaks ;
Here is no fevered breath,
No wound that bleeds and aches.

All is repose and peace,
Untrampled lies the sod ;
The shouts of battle cease,
It is the Truce of God !¹

¹ Early in the eleventh century, when war had brought great misery, and bad harvests had added to the desolation, the church

Rest, comrades, rest and sleep!
 The thoughts of men shall be
 As sentinels to keep
 Your rest from danger free.

Your silent tents of green
 We deck with fragrant flowers;
 Yours has the suffering been,
 The memory shall be ours.

HYMN OF THE MORAVIAN NUNS OF BETH- LEHEM.

AT THE CONSECRATION OF PULASKI'S BANNER.¹

WHEN the dying flame of day
 Through the chancel shot its ray,
 Far the glimmering tapers shed
 Faint light on the cowl'd head;
 And the censer burning swung,
 Where, before the altar, hung
 The crimson banner, that with prayer
 Had been consecrated there.
 And the nuns' sweet hymn was heard the while,
 Sung low, in the dim, mysterious aisle.

proclaimed the Truce of God, by which it was forbidden to wage war on any private account between Wednesday night and Monday morning of each week during the whole of Advent, and from the Monday before Ash-Wednesday till Whit-Sunday, as also on all holidays and festivals.

¹ It is said that the Polish Count Pulaski, who served in our army in the Revolution, visited Lafayette when he lay sick at Bethlehem, in Pennsylvania, and ordered a silk banner of the Moravian sisterhood there, who helped to support their house by needlework.

“Take thy banner! May it wave
Proudly o’er the good and brave;
When the battle’s distant wail
Breaks the sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion’s music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes,
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

“Take thy banner! and, beneath
The battle-cloud’s encircling wreath,
Guard it, till our homes are free!
Guard it! God will prosper thee!
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

“Take thy banner! But when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him! By our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him! he our love hath shared!
Spare him! as thou wouldst be spared!

“Take thy banner! and if e’er
Thou shouldst press the soldier’s bier,
And the muffled drum should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee.”

The warrior took that banner proud,
And it was his martial cloak and shroud !¹

THE PHANTOM SHIP.

IN Mather's *Magnalia Christi*,²
Of the old colonial time,
May be found in prose the legend
That is here set down in rhyme.

A ship sailed from New Haven,
And the keen and frosty airs,
That filled her sails at parting,
Were heavy with good men's prayers.

"O Lord ! if it be thy pleasure " —
Thus prayed the old divine —
"To bury our friends in the ocean,
Take them, for they are thine !"

¹ Pulaski was wounded at the siege of Savannah, and, dying on one of the vessels of the fleet on his way north, was buried at sea. As a matter of historic fact, the banner is preserved in the cabinet of the Maryland Historical Society, at Baltimore. Its size, twenty inches square, would have precluded its use as a shroud.

² The whole title of the book is *Magnalia Christi Americana* [Christ's mighty works in America] ; or, *The Ecclesiastical History of New England, from its first Planting, in the year 1620, unto the year of our Lord 1698*. It was first published in 1702. The story of the phantom ship is contained in it in the form of a letter from James Pierpont, a New Haven Minister. The letter occurs in Book I., chapter vi., and may also be found in *The Bodleys Afoot*, page 175.

But Master Lamberton muttered,
And under his breath said he,
"This ship is so crank and walty
I fear our grave she will be!"

And the ships that came from England,
When the winter months were gone,
Brought no tidings of this vessel
Nor of Master Lamberton.

This put the people to praying
That the Lord would let them hear
What in his greater wisdom
He had done with friends so dear.

And at last their prayers were answered: —
It was in the month of June,
An hour before the sunset
Of a windy afternoon,

When, steadily steering landward,
A ship was seen below,
And they knew it was Lamberton, Master,
Who sailed so long ago.

On she came, with a cloud of canvas,
Right against the wind that blew,
Until the eye could distinguish
The faces of the crew.

Then fell her straining topmasts,
Hanging tangled in the shrouds,
And her sails were loosened and lifted,
And blown away like clouds.

And the masts, with all their rigging,
Fell slowly, one by one,
And the hulk dilated and vanished,
As a sea-mist in the sun !

And the people who saw this marvel
Each said unto his friend,
That this was the mould of their vessel,
And thus her tragic end.

And the pastor of the village
Gave thanks to God in prayer,
That, to quiet their troubled spirits,
He had sent this Ship of Air.

PEGASUS IN POUND.

ONCE into a quiet village,
Without haste and without heed,
In the golden prime of morning,
Strayed the poet's winged steed.¹

It was Autumn, and incessant
Piped the quails from shocks and sheaves,
And, like living coals, the apples
Burned among the withering leaves.

¹ In classic mythology Pegasus was a winged horse belonging to Apollo and the Muses. Thus when a poet wrote he was said to mount Pegasus and ride ; the horse not only bore him swiftly, and by his canter gave rhythm to the verse, but by his wings bore the rider above the earth.

Loud the clamorous bell was ringing
From its belfry gaunt and grim ;
'T was the daily call to labor,
Not a triumph meant for him.

Not the less he saw the landscape,
In its gleaming vapor veiled ;
Not the less he breathed the odors
That the dying leaves exhaled.

Thus, upon the village common,
By the school-boys he was found ;
And the wise men, in their wisdom,
Put him straightway into pound.

Then the sombre village crier,
Ringing loud his brazen bell,
Wandered down the street proclaiming
There was an estray to sell.

And the curious country people,
Rich and poor, and young and old,
Came in haste to see this wondrous
Winged steed, with mane of gold.

Thus the day passed, and the evening
Fell, with vapors cold and dim ;
But it brought no food nor shelter,
Brought no straw nor stall, for him.

Patiently, and still expectant,
Looked he through the wooden bars,
Saw the moon rise o'er the landscape,
Saw the tranquil, patient stars ;

Till at length the bell at midnight
Sounded from its dark abode,
And, from out a neighboring farm-yard
Loud the cock Alectryon¹ crowed.

Then, with nostrils wide distended,
Breaking from his iron chain,
And unfolding far his pinions,
To those stars he soared again.

On the morrow, when the village
Woke to all its toil and care,
Lo! the strange steed had departed,
And they knew not when nor where.

But they found, upon the greensward
Where his struggling hoofs had trod,
Pure and bright, a fountain² flowing
From the hoof-marks in the sod.

From that hour, the fount unfailing
Gladdens the whole region round,
Strengthening all who drink its waters,
While it soothes them with its sound.

¹ Alectryon, in the old fables, was a youth who had been stationed by Mars to give notice when Apollo, the sun-god, was to appear. The boy fell asleep, and, for punishment, was turned by Mars into a cock, and ever since has remembered his duty and crows when the sun rises.

² The poet Ovid says that, with a blow of his hoof, Pegasus opened the fountain of Hippocrene (horse-spring) on Mount Helicon, and that the Muses used to drink from it. Our poet has turned the pretty story into a fable of wider meaning, by reminding us that poetry, not appreciated by all people, is yet a never-failing source of pleasure in the toiling world.

THE SERMON OF ST. FRANCIS.

UP soared the lark into the air,
A shaft of song, a wingèd prayer,
As if a soul, released from pain,
Were flying back to heaven again.

St. Francis¹ heard ; it was to him
An emblem of the Seraphim ;
The upward motion of the fire,
The light, the heat, the heart's desire.

Around Assisi's convent gate
The birds, God's poor who cannot wait,
From moor and mere and darksome wood
Came flocking for their dole of food.

"O brother birds," St. Francis said,
"Ye come to me and ask for bread,
But not with bread alone to-day
Shall ye be fed and sent away.

"Ye shall be fed, ye happy birds,
With manna of celestial words ;
Not mine, though mine they seem to be,
Not mine, though they be spoken through me.

"O, doubly are ye bound to praise
The great Creator in your lays ;

¹ St. Francis of Assisi lived in Italy at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth century, and was founder of the order of the Franciscans. There are many stories of his intimacy with birds and beasts.

He giveth you your plumes of down,
Your crimson hoods, your cloaks of brown.

“He giveth you your wings to fly
And breathe a purer air on high,
And careth for you everywhere,
Who for yourselves so little care!”

With flutter of swift wings and songs
Together rose the feathered throngs,
And singing scattered far apart;
Deep peace was in St. Francis' heart.

He knew not if the brotherhood
His homily had understood;
He only knew that to one ear
The meaning of his words was clear.

WALTER VON DER VOGELWEID.

VOGELWEID the Minnesinger,¹
When he left this world of ours,
Laid his body in the cloister,
Under Würtzburg's minster towers.

And he gave the monks his treasures,
Gave them all with this behest:
They should feed the birds at noontide
Daily on his place of rest;

¹ The Minnesingers were German lyrical poets, who first sang about the middle of the twelfth century; their songs breathed of love and sweetness in woods, meadows, flowers, grass, rivers, birds, and women, while some had a religious character. Walter's name is pronounced Fögelvid.

Saying, "From these wandering minstrels
I have learned the art of song;
Let me now repay the lessons
They have taught so well and long."

Thus the bard of love departed;
And, fulfilling his desire,
On his tomb the birds were feasted
By the children of the choir.

Day by day, o'er tower and turret,
In foul weather and in fair,
Day by day, in vaster numbers,
Flocked the poets of the air.

On the tree whose heavy branches
Overshadowed all the place,
On the pavement, on the tombstone,
On the poet's sculptured face,

On the cross-bars of each window,
On the lintel of each door,
They renewed the War of Wartburg,¹
Which the bard had fought before.

There they sang their merry carols,
Sang their lauds on every side;
And the name their voices uttered
Was the name of Vogelweid.

¹ Castle Wartburg was the residence of Landgrave Herrmann of Thüringen, in Vogelweid's time, and a great resort of the Minnesingers. The *Wartburg Minstrels' War* is the name of a poem which celebrates the singing contests of that day. Long afterward Wartburg became famous as the place where Luther translated the Bible into German.

Till at length the portly abbot
Murmured, "Why this waste of food?
Be it changed to loaves henceforward
For our fasting brotherhood."

Then in vain o'er tower and turret,
From the walls and woodland nests,
When the minster bells rang noontide,
Gathered the unwelcome guests.

Then in vain, with cries discordant,
Clamorous round the Gothic spire,
Screamed the feathered Minnesingers
For the children of the choir.

Time has long effaced the inscriptions
On the cloister's funeral stones,
And tradition only tells us
Where repose the poet's bones.

But around the vast cathedral,
By sweet echoes multiplied,
Still the birds repeat the legend,
And the name of Vogelweid.

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT.

SOUTHWARD with fleet of ice
Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
Glisten in the sun;

On each side, like pennons wide,
Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
Dripped with silver rain ;
But where he passed there were cast
Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello
Sir Humphrey Gilbert ¹ sailed ;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
Then, alas ! the land-wind failed.

Alas ! the land-wind failed,
And ice-cold grew the night ;
And nevermore, on sea or shore,
Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
The Book was in his hand ;
“Do not fear ! Heaven is as near,”
He said, “by water as by land !”

In the first watch of the night,
Without a signal's sound,

¹ Sir Humphrey Gilbert was half-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, and came to America as leader of an expedition in 1583. It was when he was returning to England, after an unsuccessful voyage in search of a silver mine, that he met his death as the poem tells. He was aboard the *Squirrel*, the smallest vessel of his little fleet, — a boat of only ten tons burden. The historian of the expedition tells how the captain of one of the other vessels came near enough to see Sir Humphrey sitting in the stern with his book, and to hear his cheerful words.

Out of the sea mysteriously,
The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
Were hanging in the shrouds ;
Every mast, as it passed,
Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
At midnight black and cold !
As of a rock was the shock ;
Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain, o'er the open main ;
Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, forever southward,
They drift through dark and day ;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream ¹
Sinking, vanish all away.

VICTOR GALBRAITH.²

UNDER the walls of Monterey
At daybreak the bugles begin to play,

¹ The warm river in the midst of the ocean, with its banks of cold water, which we call the Gulf Stream, has an important influence upon the climate of the countries by which it flows. The icebergs, as they drift into it from the north, melt away like a dream.

² "This poem," says Mr. Longfellow, "is founded on fact. Victor Galbraith was a bugler in a company of volunteer cavalry,

Victor Galbraith!

In the midst of the morning damp and gray,
These were the words they seemed to say:

“Come forth to thy death,

Victor Galbraith!”

Forth he came, with a martial tread;

Firm was his step, erect his head;

Victor Galbraith,

He who so well the bugle played,

Could not mistake the words it said:

“Come forth to thy death,

Victor Galbraith!”

He looked at the earth, he looked at the sky,

He looked at the files of musketry,

Victor Galbraith!

And he said, with a steady voice and eye,

“Take good aim; I am ready to die!”

Thus challenges death

Victor Galbraith.

Twelve fiery tongues flashed straight and red,

Six leaden balls on their errand sped;

Victor Galbraith

Falls to the ground, but he is not dead;

His name was not stamped on those balls of lead,

And they only scath

Victor Galbraith.

and was shot in Mexico for some breach of discipline. It is a common superstition among soldiers, that no balls will kill them unless their names are written on them. The old proverb says, “Every bullet has its billet.”

Three balls are in his breast and brain,
But he rises out of the dust again,
Victor Galbraith !

The water he drinks has a bloody stain ;
" Oh, kill me, and put me out of my pain ! "
In his agony prayeth
Victor Galbraith.

Forth dart once more those tongues of flame,
And the bugler has died a death of shame,
Victor Galbraith !
His soul has gone back to whence it came,
And no one answers to the name,
When the Sergeant saith,
" Victor Galbraith ! "

Under the walls of Monterey
By night a bugle is heard to play,
Victor Galbraith !
Through the mist of the valley damp and gray
The sentinels hear the sound, and say,
" That is the wraith
Of Victor Galbraith ! "

THE ROPEWALK.

IN that building, long and low,
With its windows all a-row,
Like the port-holes of a hulk,
Human spiders spin and spin,
Backward down their threads so thin
Dropping, each a hempen bulk.

At the end, an open door ;
Squares of sunshine on the floor
 Light the long and dusky lane ;
And the whirring of a wheel,
Dull and drowsy, makes me feel
 All its spokes are in my brain.

As the spinners to the end
Downward go and reascend,
 Gleam the long threads in the sun ;
While within this brain of mine
Cobwebs brighter and more fine
 By the busy wheel are spun.

Two fair maidens in a swing,
Like white doves upon the wing,
 First before my vision pass ;
Laughing, as their gentle hands
Closely clasp the twisted strands,
 At their shadow on the grass.

Then a booth of mountebanks,
With its smell of tan and planks,
 And a girl poised high in air
On a cord, in spangled dress,
With a faded loveliness,
 And a weary look of care.

Then a homestead among farms,
And a woman with bare arms
 Drawing water from a well ;
As the bucket mounts apace,
With it mounts her own fair face,
 As at some magician's spell.

Then an old man in a tower,
Ringing loud the noontide hour,
 While the rope coils round and round
Like a serpent at his feet,
And again, in swift retreat,
 Nearly lifts him from the ground.

Then within a prison-yard,
Faces fixed, and stern, and hard,
 Laughter and indecent mirth;
Ah! it is the gallows-tree!
Breath of Christian charity,
 Blow, and sweep it from the earth!

Then a school-boy, with his kite
Gleaming in a sky of light,
 And an eager, upward look;
Steeds pursued through lane and field;
 Fowlers with their snares concealed;
 And an angler by a brook.

Ships rejoicing in the breeze,
Wrecks that float o'er unknown seas,
 Anchors dragged through faithless sand
Sea-fog drifting overhead,
And, with lessening line and lead,
 Sailors feeling for the land.

All these scenes do I behold,
These, and many left untold,
 In that building long and low;
While the wheel goes round and round,
With a drowsy, dreamy sound,
 And the spinners backward go.

SANTA FILOMENA.¹

WHENE'ER a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
Our hearts, in glad surprise,
To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
And by their overflow
Raise us from what is low!

Thus thought I, as by night I read
Of the great army of the dead,
The trenches cold and damp,
The starved and frozen camp, —

The wounded from the battle-plain,
In dreary hospitals of pain,

¹ This poem is in honor of Miss Nightingale, an English lady, who won the admiration of Christendom by her devotion to the sick and wounded in the Crimean War of 1854-55, when England and France were fighting Russia. Filomena [Latin, Philomela] is the Italian for Nightingale, and by a singular fortune there is a Saint Filomena whose memory is honored, and at Pisa, in Italy, there is a chapel dedicated to her, and over the altar a picture "representing the Saint as a beautiful, nymph-like figure, floating down from heaven attended by two angels bearing the lily, palm, and javelin, and beneath, in the foreground, the sick and maimed, who are healed by her intercession."

The cheerless corridors,
The cold and stony floors.

Lo! in that house of misery
A lady with a lamp I see
Pass through the glimmering gloom,
And flit from room to room.

And slow, as in a dream of bliss,
The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
Her shadow, as it falls
Upon the darkening walls.

As if a door in heaven should be
Opened and then closed suddenly,
The vision came and went,
The light shone and was spent.

On England's annals, through the long
Hereafter of her speech and song,
That light its rays shall cast
From portals of the past.

A Lady with a Lamp shall stand
In the great history of the land,
A noble type of good,
Heroic womanhood.

Nor even shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily, and the spear,
The symbols that of yore
Saint Filomena bore.

THE THREE KINGS.

THREE Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar ;¹
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large, and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys ;
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast,
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside well

“Of the child that is born,” said Baltasar,
“Good people, I pray you, tell us the news ;
For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews.”

¹ So, according to old tradition, were the Kings or Wise Men of the East named.

And the people answered, " You ask in vain ;
We know of no king but Herod the Great ! "
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain,
Like riders in haste, and who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them ;
And said, " Go down unto Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away ; and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn ;
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the
guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard ;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were
barred,
And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of king,
The little child in the manger lay,
The child, that would be king one day
Of a kingdom not human but divine.

His mother Mary of Nazareth
Sat watching beside his place of rest,

Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet :
The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,¹
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone ;
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array ;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

THE CASTLE BY THE SEA.²

FROM THE GERMAN OF UHLAND.³

“ HAST thou seen that lordly castle,
That Castle by the sea ?

¹ The Paraclete is the Greek for Comforter, the name by which the Holy Spirit is sometimes called in the New Testament.

² The quotation marks will help the reader to see that the poem is a dialogue between one who knew only of the coming marriage of a princess, and one who knew of the calamity which had interrupted the marriage.

³ Uhland was a German poet, who was born in 1787, and died in 1862.

Golden and red about it
The clouds float gorgeously.

“And fain it would stoop downward
To the mirrored wave below ;
And fain it would soar upward
In the evening’s crimson glow.”

“Well have I seen that castle,
That Castle by the Sea,
And the moon above it standing,
And the mist rise solemnly.”

“The winds and the waves of ocean,
Had they a merry chime ?
Didst thou hear, from those lofty chambers,
The harp and the minstrel’s rhyme ? ”

“The winds and the waves of ocean,
They rested quietly,
But I heard on the gale a sound of wail,
And tears came to mine eye.”

“And sawest thou on the turrets
The King and his royal bride ?
And the wave of their crimson mantles ?
And the golden crown of pride ?

“Led they not forth, in rapture,
A beauteous maiden there ?
Resplendent as the morning sun,
Beaming with golden hair ? ”

“ Well saw I the ancient parents,
Without the crown of pride ;
They were moving slow, in weeds of woe,
No maiden was by their side ! ”

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.¹

“ SPEAK ! speak ! thou fearful guest !
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me !
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,²
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me ? ”

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December ;

¹ “ This ballad was suggested to me,” says Mr. Longfellow, “ while riding on the sea-shore at Newport. A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armor ; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Windmill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors.” It is generally conceded now that the Norsemen had nothing to do with the old mill at Newport, which is a close copy of one standing at Chesterton, in Warwickshire, England. The destruction of the armor shortly after it was found has prevented any trustworthy examination of it, to see if it was really Scandinavian or only Indian. The poet sings as one haunted by the skeleton, and able to call out its voice.

■ This old warrior was not embalmed as an Egyptian mummy.

And, like the water's flow
 Under December's snow,
 Came a dull voice of woe
 From the heart's chamber.

“I was a Viking¹ old!
 My deeds, though manifold,
 No Skald² in song has told,
 No Saga³ taught thee!
 Take heed, that in thy verse
 Thou dost the tale rehearse,
 Else dread a dead man's curse;
 For this I sought thee.

“Far in the Northern Land,
 By the wild Baltic's strand,
 I, with my childish hand,
 Tamed the gerfalcon;
 And, with my skates fast-bound,
 Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
 That the poor whimpering hound
 Trembled to walk on.

“Oft to his frozen lair
 Tracked I the grisly bear,
 While from my path the hare
 Fled like a shadow;

¹ The Vik-ings took their name from an old Norse word, *vík*, still used in Norway, signifying creek, because these sea-pirates made their haunts among the indentations of the coast, and sallied out thence in search of booty.

■ The Skald was the Norse chronicler and poet who sang of brave deeds at the feasts of the warriors.

■ The Saga was the *saying* or chronicle of the heroic deeds. There are many of these old sagas still preserved in Northern literature.

Oft through the forest dark
 Followed the were-wolf's ¹ bark,
 Until the soaring lark
 Sang from the meadow.

*rhyme on
 line*

“But when I older grew,
 Joining a corsair's crew,
 O'er the dark sea I flew
 With the marauders.
 Wild was the life we led;
 Many the souls that sped,
 Many the hearts that bled,
 By our stern orders.

“Many a wassail-bout
 Wore the long winter out;
 Often our midnight shout
 Set the cocks crowing,
 As we the Berserk's ² tale
 Measured in cups of ale,
 Draining the oaken pail,
 Filled to o'erflowing.

“Once as I told in glee
 Tales of the stormy sea,
 Soft eyes did gaze on me,

¹ In the fables of Northern Europe there were said to be men who could change themselves into wolves at pleasure, and they were called were-wolves.

² There was a famous warrior in the fabulous history of Norway who went into battle bare of armor (*ber* — bare; *særke* — a shirt of mail), but possessed of a terrible rage; he had twelve sons like himself, who were also called Berserks or Berserker, and the phrase Berserker rage has come into use to express a terrible fury which makes a man fearless and strong.

Burning, yet tender ;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

“I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frightened.

“Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory ;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

“While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

“She was a Prince’s child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew’s flight,
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded ?

“Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen !
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armed hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

“Then launched they to the blast
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us ;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

“And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death ! was the helmsman’s hail,
Death without quarter !
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel ;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water !

- “As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
 With his prey laden ;
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
 Bore I the maiden.
- “Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o’er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
 Stretching to leeward ;
There for my lady’s bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
 Stands looking seaward.
- “There lived we many years ;
Time dried the maiden’s tears ;
She had forgot her fears,
 She was a mother ;
Death closed her mild blue eyes,
Under that tower she lies ;
Ne’er shall the sun arise
 On such another !
- “Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen !
Hateful to me were men,
 The sunlight hateful !
In that vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
 O, death was grateful !

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
 Bursting these prison bars,
 Up to its native stars
 My soul ascended !
 There from the flowing bowl
 Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
*Skool !*¹ to the Northland ! *skool !*"
 Thus the tale ended.

THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF AGASSIZ.²

MAY 28, 1857.

It was fifty years ago
 In the pleasant month of May,
 In the beautiful Pays de Vaud,³
 A child in its cradle lay.

And Nature, the old nurse, took
 The child upon her knee,
 Saying: "Here is a story-book
 Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
 "Into regions yet untrod ;
 And read what is still unread
 In the manuscripts of God."

¹ "In Scandinavia," says Mr. Longtellow, "this is the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word [skål] in order to preserve the correct pronunciation."

² Louis John Rudolph Agassiz, the great naturalist and teacher, was born in Switzerland, May 28, 1807, and died at Cambridge, Massachusetts, December 14, 1873.

³ Pronounced Pah'ee dě Vō.

And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

So she keeps him still a child,
And will not let him go,
Though at times his heart beats wild
For the beautiful Pays de Vaud ;

Though at times he hears in his dreams
The Ranz des Vaches¹ of old,
And the rush of mountain streams
From glaciers clear and cold ;

And the mother at home says, " Hark !
For his voice I listen and yearn ;
It is growing late and dark,
And my boy does not return ! "

MAIDENHOOD.

MAIDEN ! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies !

¹ A melody played by the Swiss mountaineers on the Alphorn, when leading the cows to pasture, or calling them home. Pronounced Ränz dā Vāsh.

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run !

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet !

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse !

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision,
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian ?

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly ?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar ?

O, thou child of many prayers !
Life hath quicksands, — Life hath snares .
Care and age come unawares !

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered ; —
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand ;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

Oh, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal ;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

EXCELSIOR.¹

THE shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,

Excelsior !

¹The original manuscript of this poem, showing the various changes made by the poet in the course of composition is in the

ref. in or 100.

His brow was sad ; his eye beneath
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior !

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright ;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior !

“ Try not the Pass ! ” the old man said ;
“ Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide ! ”
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior !

Oh stay,” the maiden said, “ and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast ! ”
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior !

“ Beware the pine-tree’s withered branch !
Beware the awful avalanche ! ”
This was the peasant’s last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excelsior !

library of Harvard University. Mr. Longfellow in a letter to a friend intimates his intention in the poem in these words : “ This was no more than to display, in a series of pictures, the life of a man of genius, resisting all temptations, laying aside all fears, heedless of all warnings, and pressing right on to accomplish his purpose. His motto is Excelsior — ‘ higher.’ ”

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard ¹
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveller, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy ² stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;

¹ The monastery of St. Bernard high up in the Alps occupies a dangerous pass, and many travellers have found shelter there. It gave rise to the breed of St. Bernard dogs, famous for their intelligence and the aid they have given in rescuing travellers from the blinding snow.

² The suggestion of the poem came from the smithy which the poet passed daily, and which stood beneath a horse-chestnut tree not far from his house in Cambridge. The tree, against the protests of Mr. Longfellow and others, was removed in 1876, on the ground that it imperilled drivers of heavy loads who passed under it.

And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are as strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan ;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door ;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch ¹ the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys ;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

¹ After this poem had been printed for some time, Mr. Longfellow was disposed to change this word to "watch," but the original form had grown so familiar that he decided to leave it.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!

He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought ;
Thus on its scunding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

FROM MY ARM-CHAIR.

TO THE CHILDREN OF CAMBRIDGE

WHO PRESENTED TO ME, ON MY SEVENTY-SECOND BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1879, THIS CHAIR MADE FROM THE WOOD OF THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH'S CHESTNUT-TREE.

AM I a king, that I should call my own
This splendid ebon throne ?
Or by what reason, or what right divine,
Can I proclaim it mine ?

Only, perhaps, by right divine of song
It may to me belong ;

Only because the spreading chestnut-tree
Of old was sung by me.

Well I remember it in all its prime,
When in the summer-time
The affluent foliage of its branches made
A cavern of cool shade.

There, by the blacksmith's forge, beside the street,
Its blossoms white and sweet
Enticed the bees, until it seemed alive,
And murmured like a hive.

And when the winds of autumn, with a shout,
Tossed its great arms about,
The shining chestnuts, bursting from the sheath,
Dropped to the ground beneath.

And now some fragments of its branches bare,
Shaped as a stately chair,
Have by my hearthstone found a home at last,
And whisper of the past.

The Danish king could not in all his pride
Repel the ocean tide,
But, seated in this chair, I can in rhyme
Roll back the tide of Time.

I see again, as one in vision sees,
The blossoms and the bees,
And hear the children's voices shout and call,
And the brown chestnuts fall.

I see the smithy with its fires aglow,
I hear the bellows blow,

And the shrill hammers on the anvil beat
The iron white with heat!

And thus, dear children, have ye made for me
This day a jubilee,
And to my more than threescore years and ten
Brought back my youth again.

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind,
And in it are enshrined
The precious keepsakes, into which is wrought
The giver's loving thought.

Only your love and your remembrance could
Give life to this dead wood,
And make these branches, leafless now so long,
Blossom again in song.¹

SONG.

STAY, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,

■ Contributions for the purchase of the chair came from some seven hundred children of the public schools. Mr. Longfellow had this poem, which he wrote on the day the chair was given him, printed on a sheet, and was accustomed to give a copy to each child who visited him and sat in the chair.

And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt :

To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest ;
The bird is safest in its nest ;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly
A hawk is hovering in the sky ;

To stay at home is best.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

It was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea ;
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
Had sailed to the Spanish Main,
" I pray thee, put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane.

" Last night, the moon had a golden ring,
And to-night no moon we see ! "

ed. Ballard form is a v c b

The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength ;
She shuddered and paused, like a frightened steed,
Then leaped her cable's length.

“Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughtèr,
And do not tremble so ;
For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow.”

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
Against the stinging blast ;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

“O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,
Oh say, what may it be ?”
“’T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast !” —
And he steered for the open sea.

“O father ! I hear the sound of guns,
Oh say, what may it be ?”
“Some ship in distress, that cannot live
In such an angry sea !”

“O father ! I see a gleaming light,
Oh say, what may it be ?”

But the father answered never a word,
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
That saved she might be ;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land ;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board ;

Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
 Ho ! ho ! the breakers roared !

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
 A fisherman stood aghast,
 To see the form of a maiden fair,
 Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
 The salt tears in her eyes ;
 And he saw her hair, like the brown seaweed,
 On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the *Hesperus*,
 In the midnight and the snow !
 Christ save us all from a death like this,
 On the reef of Norman's Woe !¹

THE BELLS OF LYNN.

HEARD AT NAHANT.²

O CURFEW of the setting sun ! O Bells of Lynn !
 O requiem of the dying day ! O Bells of Lynn !

From the dark belfries of yon cloud-cathedral wafted,
 Your sounds aerial seem to float, O Bells of Lynn !

It was the loss of a real schooner *Hesperus*, off the reef of Norman's Woe, near Gloucester, Massachusetts, which suggested this ballad to the poet.

² Nahant, a promontory running out from Lynn beach, was long a summer home of Mr. Longfellow. Though there is no rhyme, the steady recurrence of the phrase, "O Bells of Lynn," gives both rhythmic swing and the effect of rhyme.

Borne on the evening wind across the crimson twilight,
O'er land and sea they rise and fall, O Bells of Lynn!

The fisherman in his boat, far out beyond the headland,
Listens, and leisurely rows ashore, O Bells of Lynn!

Over the shining sands the wandering cattle homeward
Follow each other at your call, O Bells of Lynn!

The distant lighthouse hears, and with his flaming signal
Answers you, passing the watchword on, O Bells of Lynn!

And down the darkening coast run the tumultuous surges,
And clap their hands, and shout to you, O Bells of Lynn!

Till from the shuddering sea, with your wild incantations,
Ye summon up the spectral moon, O Bells of Lynn!

And startled at the sight, like the weird woman of Endor,
Ye cry aloud, and then are still, O Bells of Lynn!

THE TIDE RISES, THE TIDE FALLS.

THE tide rises, the tide falls,
The twilight darkens, the curlew calls;
Along the sea-sands damp and brown
The traveller hastens toward the town,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls,
But the sea, the sea in the darkness calls;
The little waves, with their soft, white hands,
Efface the footprints in the sands,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls
Stamp and neigh, as the hostler calls;
The day returns, but nevermore
Returns the traveller to the shore,
And the tide rises, the tide falls.

THE OPEN WINDOW.

THE old house by the lindens¹
Stood silent in the shade,
And on the gravelled pathway
The light and shadow played.

¹ The old house by the lindens is what was known as the Lechmere house which formerly stood on Brattle Street, corner of Sparks Street, in Cambridge. It was in this house that Baron Riedesel was quartered as prisoner of war after the surrender of Burgoyne, and the window-pane used to be shown on which the Baroness wrote her name with a diamond.

I saw the nursery windows
Wide open to the air ;
But the faces of the children,
They were no longer there.

The large Newfoundland house-dog
Was standing by the door ;
He looked for his little playmates,
Who would return no more.

They walked not under the lindens,
They played not in the hall ;
But shadow, and silence, and sadness
Were hanging over all.

The birds sang in the branches,
With sweet, familiar tone ;
But the voices of the children
Will be heard in dreams alone !

And the boy that walked beside me,
He could not understand
Why closer in mine, ah ! closer,
I pressed his warm, soft hand !

RESIGNATION.¹

THERE is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there !

¹ Written in the autumn of 1848, after the death of his little daughter Fanny. There is a passage in the poet's diary, under date of November 12, in which he says : " I feel very sad to-day. I miss very much my dear little Fanny. An inappeasable longing to see her comes over me at times, which I can hardly control."

There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead ;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors ;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death ! What seems so is transition ;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead, — the child of our affection, —
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air ;

Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child ;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,
Clothed with celestial grace ;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest, —

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay ;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

A DAY OF SUNSHINE.

O GIFT of God ! O perfect day :
Whereon shall no man work, but play ;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be !

Through every fibre of my brain,
 Through every nerve, through every vein,
 I feel the electric thrill, the touch
 Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
 Playing celestial symphonies ;
 I see the branches downward bent,
 Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
 The splendid scenery of the sky,
 Where through a sapphire sea the sun
 Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-land in the West,
 Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
 Whose steep sierra far uplifts
 Its craggy summits white with drifts.

Blow, winds ! and waft through all the rooms
 The snow-flakes of the cherry-blooms !
 Blow, winds ! and bend within my reach
 The fiery blossoms of the peach !

O Life and Love ! O happy throng
 Of thoughts, whose only speech is song !
 O heart of man ! canst thou not be
 Blithe as the air is, and as free ?

DAYLIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.

IN broad daylight, and at noon,
 Yesterday I saw the moon

Sailing high, but faint and white,
As a school-boy's paper kite,

In broad daylight, yesterday,
I read a Poet's mystic lay ;
And it seemed to me at most
As a phantom, or a ghost.

But at length the feverish day
Like a passion died away,
And the night, serene and still,
Fell on village, vale, and hill.

Then the moon, in all her pride,
Like a spirit glorified,
Filled and overflowed the night
With revelations of her light.

And the Poet's song again
Passed like music through my brain ;
Night interpreted to me
All its grace and mystery.

TWILIGHT.

THE twilight is sad and cloudy,
The wind blows wild and free,
And like the wings of sea-birds
Flash the white caps of the sea.

But in the fisherman's cottage
There shines a ruddier light,
And a little face at the window
Peers out into the night.

Close, close it is pressed to the window,
As if those childish eyes
Were looking into the darkness
To see some form arise.

And a woman's waving shadow
Is passing to and fro,
Now rising to the ceiling,
Now bowing and bending low.

What tale do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, bleak and wild,
As they beat at the crazy casement,
Tell to that little child?

And why do the roaring ocean,
And the night-wind, wild and bleak,
As they beat at the heart of the mother
Drive the color from her cheek?

DAYBREAK.

A WIND came up out of the sea,
And said, "O mists make room for me."

It hailed the ships, and cried, "Sail on,
Ye mariners, the night is gone."

And hurried landward far away,
Crying, "Awake! it is the day."

It said unto the forest, "Shout!
Hang all your leafy banners out!"

It touched the wood-bird's folded wing,
And said, "O bird, awake and sing."

And o'er the farms, "O chanticleer,
Your clarion blow; the day is near."

It whispered to the fields of corn,
"Bow down, and hail the coming morn."

It shouted through the belfry tower,
"Awake, O bell! proclaim the hour."

It crossed the churchyard with a sigh,
And said, "Not yet! in quiet lie."

THE CITY AND THE SEA.

THE panting City cried to the Sea,
"I am faint with heat, — Oh breathe on me!"

And the Sea said, "Lo, I breathe! but my breath
To some will be life, to others death!"

As to Prometheus, bringing ease
In pain, come the Oceanides,¹

So to the city, hot with the flame
Of the pitiless sun, the east wind came.

It came from the heaving breast of the deep,
Silent as dreams are, and sudden as sleep.

¹ In the classic fable Prometheus was chained to a rock for punishment, and the daughters of Ocean came to console him.

Life-giving, death-giving, which will it be ;
O breath of the merciful, merciless Sea ?

FOUR BY THE CLOCK.¹

FOUR by the clock ! and yet not day ;
But the great world rolls and wheels away,
With its cities on land, and its ships at sea,
Into the dawn that is to be !

Only the lamp in the anchored bark
Sends its glimmer across the dark,
And the heavy breathing of the sea
Is the only sound that comes to me.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO
THE PSALMIST.

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream ! —
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real ! Life is earnest !
And the grave is not its goal ;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way ;

¹ "Nahant, September 8, 1860, four o'clock in the morning."

But to act, that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act, — act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

THE CASTLE-BUILDER.

A GENTLE boy, with soft and silken locks,
A dreamy boy, with brown and tender eyes,
A castle-builder, with his wooden blocks,
And towers that touch imaginary skies.

A fearless rider on his father's knee,
An eager listener unto stories told
At the Round Table¹ of the nursery,
Of heroes and adventures manifold.

There will be other towers for thee to build ;
There will be other steeds for thee to ride ;
There will be other legends, and all filled
With greater marvels and more glorified.

Build on, and make thy castles high and fair,
Rising and reaching upward to the skies ;
Listen to voices in the upper air,
Nor lose thy simple faith in mysteries.

THE CHAMBER OVER THE GATE.

Is it so far from thee
Thou canst no longer see,
In the Chamber over the Gate,
That old man desolate,
Weeping and wailing sore
For his son, who is no more ?
O Absalom, my son !

¹ In old English legend there was a famous order of knights called the Knights of the Round Table, with King Arthur at their head.

Is it so long ago
That cry of human woe
From the walled city came,
Calling on his dear name,
That it has died away
In the distance of to-day?
O Absalom, my son!

There is no far or near,
There is neither there nor here,
There is neither soon nor late,
In that Chamber over the Gate,
Nor any long ago
To that cry of human woe,
O Absalom, my son!

From the ages that are past
The voice sounds like a blast,
Over seas that wreck and drown,
Over tumult of traffic and town;
And from ages yet to be
Come the echoes back to me,
O Absalom, my son!

Somewhere at every hour
The watchman on the tower
Looks forth, and sees the fleet
Approach of the hurrying feet
Of messengers, that bear
The tidings of despair.
O Absalom, my son!

He goes forth from the door,
Who shall return no more.

With him our joy departs ;
The light goes out in our hearts ;
In the Chamber over the Gate
We sit disconsolate.

O Absalom, my son !

That 't is a common grief
Bringeth but slight relief ;
Ours is the bitterest loss,
Ours is the heaviest cross ;
And forever the cry will be
“ Would God I had died for thee,
O Absalom, my son ! ” ¹

THE REVENGE OF RAIN-IN-THE-FACE.

IN that desolate land and lone,
Where the Big Horn and Yellowstone
Roar down their mountain path,
By their fires the Sioux Chiefs
Muttered their woes and griefs
And the menace of their wrath.

“ Revenge ! ” cried Rain-in-the-Face,
“ Revenge upon all the race
Of the White Chief with yellow hair ! ” ²

¹ Suggested to the poet when writing a letter of condolence to the Bishop of Mississippi, whose son, the Rev. Duncan C. Green, had died at his post at Greenville, Mississippi, September 15, 1878, during the prevalence of yellow fever. The reader of the Bible does not need to be reminded of the touching story of David's lament over his son Absalom.

² General George A. Custer, who was surprised, and with his entire force put to death by the Sioux Indians, June 25, 1876, “the year of a hundred years.”

And the mountains dark and high
From their crags reëchoed the cry
Of his anger and despair.

In the meadow, spreading wide
By woodland and river-side
The Indian village stood ;
All was silent as a dream,
Save the rushing of the stream
And the blue-jay in the wood.

In his war paint and his beads,
Like a bison among the reeds,
In ambush the Sitting Bull
Lay with three thousand braves
Crouched in the clefts and caves,
Savage, unmerciful !

Into the fatal snare
The White Chief with yellow hair
And his three hundred men
Dashed headlong, sword in hand ;
But of that gallant band
Not one returned again.

The sudden darkness of death
Overwhelmed them like the breath
And smoke of a furnace fire :
By the river's bank, and between
The rocks of the ravine,
They lay in their bloody attire.

But the foemen fled in the night,
And Rain-in-the-Face, in his flight,

Uplifted high in air
 As a ghastly trophy, bore
 The brave heart, that beat no more,
 Of the White Chief with yellow hair.

Whose was the right and the wrong?
 Sing it, O funeral song,
 With a voice that is full of tears,
 And say that our broken faith
 Wrought all this ruin and scathe,
 In the Year of a Hundred Years.

PRELUDE.

As treasures that men seek,
 Deep buried in sea-sands,
 Vanish if they but speak,
 And elude their eager hands,—

So ye escape and slip,
 O songs, and fade away,
 When the word is on my lip
 To interpret what ye say.

Were it not better, then,
 To let the treasures rest
 Hid from the eyes of men
 Locked in their iron chest?

I have but marked the place,
 But half the secret told,
 That, following this slight trace,
 Others may find the gold.¹

¹ This poem was written to serve as a prelude to a group of translations. The three poems which follow this are translations

THE BOY AND THE BROOK.

FROM THE ARMENIAN.

DOWN from yon distant mountain height
The brooklet flows through the village street;
A boy comes forth to wash his hands,
Washing, yes, washing, there he stands,
In the water cool and sweet.

Brook, from what mountain dost thou come?
O my brooklet cool and sweet!
I come from yon mountain high and cold
Where lieth the new snow on the old,
And melts in the summer heat.

Brook, to what river dost thou go?
O my brooklet cool and sweet!
I go to the river there below
Where in bunches the violets grow,
And sun and shadow meet.

Brook, to what garden dost thou go?
O my brooklet cool and sweet!
I go to the garden in the vale
Where all night long the nightingale
Her love-song doth repeat.

Brook, to what fountain dost thou go?
O my brooklet cool and sweet!
I go to the fountain at whose brink

Throughout his life Mr. Longfellow delighted in turning poetry from other languages into English verse, and his translations are sometimes more melodious than the originals.

The maid that loves thee comes to drink,
And whenever she looks therein,
I rise to meet her, and kiss her chin,
And my joy is then complete.

THE SEA HATH ITS PEARLS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HEINRICH HEINE.

THE sea hath its pearls,
The heaven hath its stars;
But my heart, my heart,
My heart hath its love.

Great are the sea and the heaven,
Yet greater is my heart;
And fairer than pearls and stars
Flashes and beams my love.

A SONG FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

IF thou art sleeping, maiden,
Awake, and open thy door.
'Tis the break of day, and we must away,
O'er meadow, and mount, and moor.

Wait not to find thy slippers,
But come with thy naked feet:
We shall have to pass through the dewy grass,
And waters wide and fleet.

LOSS AND GAIN.

WHEN I compare
What I have lost with what I have gained,
What I have missed with what attained,
Little room do I find for pride.

I am aware
How many days have been idly spent ;
How like an arrow the good intent
Has fallen short or been turned aside.

But who shall dare
To measure loss and gain in this wise ?
Defeat may be victory in disguise ;
The lowest ebb is the turn of the tide.

TO THE AVON.

FLOW on, sweet river ! like his verse
Who lies beneath this sculptured hearse ;
Nor wait beside the churchyard wall
For him who cannot hear thy call.

Thy playmate once ; I see him now
A boy with sunshine on his brow,
And hear in Stratford's quiet street
The patter of his little feet.

I see him by thy shallow edge
Wading knee-deep amid the sedge ;
And lost in thought, as if thy stream
Were the swift river of a dream.

He wonders whitherward it flows;
 And fain would follow where it goes,
 To the wide world, that shall erelong
 Be filled with his melodious song.

Flow on, fair stream ! That dream is o'er;
 He stands upon another shore ;
 A vaster river near him flows,
 And still he follows where it goes.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG.¹

I SHOT an arrow into the air,
 It fell to earth, I knew not where ;
 For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
 Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
 It fell to earth, I knew not where ;
 For who has sight so keen and strong,
 That it can follow the flight of song ?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
 I found the arrow, still unbroke ;
 And the song, from beginning to end,
 I found again in the heart of a friend.

¹ "October 16, 1845. Before church, wrote *The Arrow and the Song*, which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced on to the paper with arrow's speed. Literally an improvisation." — *Diary of H. W. Longfellow*.

THE CHALLENGE.

I HAVE a vague remembrance
Of a story, that is told
In some ancient Spanish legend
Or chronicle of old.

It was when brave King Sanchez ¹
Was before Zamora slain,
And his great besieging army
Lay encamped upon the plain.

Don Diego de Ordoñez ²
Sallied forth in front of all,
And shouted loud his challenge
To the warders on the wall.

All the people of Zamora,
Both the born and the unborn,
As traitors did he challenge
With taunting words of scorn.

The living, in their houses,
And in their graves, the dead!
And the waters of their rivers,
And their wine, and oil, and bread

There is a greater army,
That besets us round with strife,
A starving, numberless army,
At all the gates of life.

¹ Sanchāth.

² Ordōnyāth.

The poverty-stricken millions
Who challenge our wine and bread,
And impeach us all as traitors,
Both the living and the dead.

And whenever I sit at the banquet,
Where the feast and song are high,
Amid the mirth and the music
I can hear that fearful cry.

And hollow and haggard faces
Look into the lighted hall,
And wasted hands are extended
To catch the crumbs that fall.

For within there is light and plenty,
And odors fill the air ;
But without there is cold and darkness,
And hunger and despair.

And there in the camp of famine
In wind and cold and rain,
Christ, the great Lord of the army,•
Lies dead upon the plain !

THE DAY IS DONE.

[Written in the fall of 1844 as proem to *The Waif*, a small volume of poems selected by Mr. Longfellow and published at Christmas of that year.]

THE day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of Night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village
Gleam through the rain and the mist,
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me
That my soul cannot resist :

A feeling of sadness and longing,
That is not akin to pain,
And resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,
Some simple and heartfelt lay,
That shall soothe this restless feeling,
And banish the thoughts of day.

Not from the grand old masters,
Not from the bards sublime,
Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of Time.

For, like strains of martial music,
Their mighty thoughts suggest
Life's endless toil and endeavor ;
And to-night I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,
Whose songs gushed from his heart,
As showers from the clouds of summer,
Or tears from the eyelids start ;

Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies.

Such songs have power to quiet
The restless pulse of care,
And come like the benediction
That follows after prayer.

Then read from the treasured volume
The poem of thy choice,
And lend to the rhyme of the poet
The beauty of thy voice.

And the night shall be filled with music,
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away.

TO AN OLD DANISH SONG BOOK.

[After reading Hans Andersen's *Story of my Life*, Longfellow notes in his diary: "Autumn always brings back very freshly my autumnal sojourn in Copenhagen, delightfully mingled with bracing air and yellow falling leaves. I have tried to record the impression in the song *To an Old Danish Song Book*."]]

WELCOME, my old friend,
Welcome to a foreign fireside,
While the sullen gales of autumn
Shake the windows.

The ungrateful world
Has, it seems, dealt harshly with thee,
Since, beneath the skies of Denmark,
First I met thee.

There are marks of age,
There are thumb-marks on thy margin,

Made by hands that clasped thee rudely,
At the alehouse.

Soiled and dull thou art;
Yellow are thy time-worn pages,
As the russet, rain-molested
Leaves of autumn.

Thou art stained with wine
Scattered from hilarious goblets,
As the leaves with the libations
Of Olympus.

Yet dost thou recall
Days departed, half-forgotten,
When in dreamy youth I wandered
By the Baltic, —

When I paused to hear
The old ballad of King Christian ¹
Shouted from suburban taverns
In the twilight.

Thou recallest bards,
Who, in solitary chambers,
And with hearts by passion wasted,
Wrote thy pages.

Thou recallest homes
Where thy songs of love and friendship
Made the gloomy Northern winter
Bright as summer.

¹ See Longfellow's translation of this national song of Denmark in *Paul Revere's Ride and other Poems*, Riverside Literature Series, No. 63.

Once some ancient Scald,¹
In his bleak, ancestral Iceland,
Chanted staves of these old ballads
To the Vikings.

Once in Elsinore,
At the court of old King Hamlet,
Yorick and his boon companions
Sang these ditties.

Once Prince Frederick's Guard
Sang them in their smoky barracks ; —
Suddenly the English cannon
Joined the chorus !

Peasants in the field,
Sailors on the roaring ocean,
Students, tradesmen, pale mechanics,
All have sung them.

Thou hast been their friend ;
They, alas ! have left thee friendless !
Yet at least by one warm fireside
Art thou welcome.

And, as swallows build
In these wide, old-fashioned chimneys,
So thy twittering song shall nestle
In my bosom, —

Quiet, close, and warm,
Sheltered from all molestation,
And recalling by their voices
Youth and travel.

AMALFI.

SWEET the memory is to me
Of a land beyond the sea,
Where the waves and mountains meet,
Where amid her mulberry-trees
Sits Amalfi in the heat,
Bathing ever her white feet
In the tideless summer seas.

In the middle of the town,
From its fountains in the hills,
Tumbling through the narrow gorge,
The Canneto rushes down,
Turns the great wheels of the mills,
Lifts the hammers of the forge.

'T is a stairway, not a street,
That ascends the deep ravine,
Where the torrent leaps between
Rocky walls that almost meet.
Toiling up from stair to stair
Peasant girls their burdens bear;
Sunburnt daughters of the soil,
Stately figures tall and straight,
What inexorable fate
Dooms them to this life of toil?

Lord of vineyards and of lands,
Far above the convent stands.
On its terraced walk aloof
Leans a monk with folded hands.
Placid, satisfied, serene,

Looking down upon the scene
Over wall and red-tiled roof ;
Wondering unto what good end
All this toil and traffic tend,
And why all men cannot be
Free from care and free from pain,
And the sordid love of gain,
And as indolent as he.

Where are now the freighted barks
From the marts of east and west ?
Where the knights in iron sarks
Journeying to the Holy Land,
Glove of steel upon the hand,
Cross of crimson on the breast ?
Where the pomp of camp and court ?
Where the pilgrims with their prayers ?
Where the merchants with their wares,
And their gallant brigantines
Safely sailing into port
Chased by corsair Algerines ?

Vanished like a fleet of cloud,
Like a passing trumpet-blast,
Are those splendors of the past,
And the commerce and the crowd !
Fathoms deep beneath the seas
Lie the ancient wharves and quays,
Swallowed by the engulfing waves ;
Silent streets and vacant halls,
Ruined roofs and towers and walls ;
Hidden from all mortal eyes
Deep the sunken city lies :
Even cities have their graves !
This is an enchanted land !

Round the headlands far away
Sweeps the blue Salernian bay
With its sickle of white sand :
Further still and furthestmost
On the dim discovered coast
Pæstum with its ruins lies,
And its roses all in bloom
Seem to tinge the fatal skies
Of that lonely land of doom.

On his terrace, high in air,
Nothing doth the good monk care
For such worldly themes as these.
From the garden just below
Little puffs of perfume blow,
And ■ sound is in his ears
Of the murmur of the bees
In the shining chestnut-trees ;
Nothing else he heeds or hears.
All the landscape seems to swoon
In the happy afternoon ;
Slowly o'er his senses creep
The encroaching waves of sleep,
And he sinks as sank the town,
Unresisting, fathoms down,
Into caverns cool and deep !

Walled about with drifts of snow,
Hearing the fierce north-wind blow,
Seeing all the landscape white
And the river cased in ice,
Comes this memory of delight,
Comes this vision unto me
Of a long-lost Paradise
In the land beyond the sea.

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE.

A LEAF FROM KING ALFRED'S OROSIUS.¹

OTHERE,² the old sea-captain,
Who dwelt in Helgoland,
To King Alfred, the Lover of Truth,
Brought a snow-white walrus-tooth,
Which he held in his brown right hand.

His figure was tall and stately,
Like a boy's his eye appeared ;
His hair was yellow as hay,
But threads of a silvery gray
Gleamed in his tawny beard.

Hearty and hale was Othere,
His cheek had the color of oak ;
With a kind of a laugh in his speech,
Like the sea-tide on a beach,
As unto the King he spoke.

And Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Had a book upon his knees,
And wrote down the wondrous tale
Of him who was first to sail
Into the Arctic seas.

“ So far I live to the northward,
No man lives north of me ;

¹ Orosius was a Spanish priest who lived in the fifth century and wrote a universal history which was translated by King Alfred the Great of England.

² O'ther-e.

To the east are wild mountain-chains,
And beyond them meres and plains;
To the westward all is sea.

“ So far I live to the northward,
From the harbor of Skeringes-hale,
If you only sailed by day,
With a fair wind all the way,
More than a month would you sail.

“ I own six hundred reindeer,
With sheep and swine beside ;
I have tribute from the Finns,
Whalebone and reindeer-skins,
And ropes of walrus-hide.

“ I ploughed the land with horses,
But my heart was ill at ease,
For the old seafaring men
Came to me now and then,
With their sagas of the seas ;—

“ Of Iceland and of Greenland,
And the stormy Hebrides,
And the undiscovered deep ;—
Oh I could not eat nor sleep
For thinking of those seas.

“ To the northward stretched the desert,
How far I fain would know ;
So at last I sallied forth,
And three days sailed due north,
As far as the whale-ships go.

“ To the west of me was the ocean,
To the right the desolate shore,
But I did not slacken sail
For the walrus or the whale,
Till after three days more.

“ The days grew longer and longer,
Till they became as one,
And northward through the haze
I saw the sullen blaze
Of the red midnight sun.

“ And then uprose before me,
Upon the water's edge,
The huge and haggard shape
Of that unknown North Cape,
Whose form is like a wedge.

“ The sea was rough and stormy,
The tempest howled and wailed,
And the sea-fog, like a ghost,
Haunted that dreary coast,
But onward still I sailed.

“ Four days I steered to eastward,
Four days without a night:
Round in a fiery ring
Went the great sun, O King,
With red and lurid light.”

Here Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Ceased writing for a while ;
And raised his eyes from his book,
With a strange and puzzled look,
And an incredulous smile.

But Othere, the old sea-captain,
He neither paused nor stirred,
Till the King listened and then
Once more took up his pen,
And wrote down every word.

“And now the land,” said Othere,
“Bent southward suddenly,
And I followed the curving shore
And ever southward bore
Into a nameless sea.

“And there we hunted the walrus,
The narwhale, and the seal ;
Ha ! ’t was a noble game !
And like the lightning’s flame
Flew our harpoons of steel.

“There were six of us all together,
Norsemen of Helgoland ;
In two days and no more
We killed of them threescore,
And dragged them to the strand !”

Here Alfred the Truth-teller
Suddenly closed his book,
And lifted his blue eyes,
With doubt and strange surmise
Depicted in their look.

And Othere the old sea-captain
Stared at him wild and weird,
Then smiled, till his shining teeth
Gleamed white from underneath
His tawny, quivering beard.

And to the King of the Saxons,
In witness of the truth,
Raising his noble head,
He stretched his brown hand, and said,
“Behold this walrus-tooth!”

CURFEW.

I.

SOLEMNLY, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew¹ Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Cover the embers,
And put out the light;
Toil comes with the morning,
And rest with the night.

Dark grow the windows,
And quenched is the fire;
Sound fades into silence, —
All footsteps retire.

No voice in the chambers,
No sound in the hall!
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all!

II.

The book is completed,
And closed, like the day;

¹ The origin of this word is interesting, and the fifth line hints at it.

And the hand that has written it
Lays it away.

Dim grow its fancies ;
Forgotten they lie ;
Like coals in the ashes,
They darken and die.

Song sinks into silence,
The story is told,
The windows are darkened,
The hearth-stone is cold.

Darker and darker
The black shadows fall ;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.

THE POET AND HIS SONGS.

As the birds come in the Spring,
We know not from where ;
As the stars come at evening
From depths of the air ;

As the rain comes from the cloud,
And the brook from the ground ;
As suddenly, low or loud,
Out of silence a sound ;

As the grape comes to the vine,
The fruit to the tree ;
As the wind comes to the pine,
And the tide to the sea ;

As come the white sails of ships
 O'er the ocean's verge ;
 As comes the smile to the lips,
 The foam to the surge ;

So come to the Poet his songs,
 All hitherward blown
 From the misty realm, that belongs
 To the vast Unknown.

His, and not his, are the lays
 He sings ; and their fame
 Is his, and not his ; and the praise
 And the pride of a name.

For voices pursue him by day,
 And haunt him by night,
 And he listens, and needs must obey,
 When the Angel says, " Write ! " ¹

¹ This poem was written to close the last volume of verse published by Mr. Longfellow.

Standard of metre
 is of accents in a line, and
 the unaccented syllables con-
 ranged.

X	iambus	no. accents in line	
1	iambus	2	dimeter
X	dactyl	3	trimeter
X	anapest	4	tetrameter
		5	pentameter

Byrne on 1 line mas.

" " 2 . fem.

meaning of s
in verse is e

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